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Pattern of conferences

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

In its resolution 56/242 entitled "Pattern of conferences", the General Assembly addressed a number of requests to the Secretary-General for the presentation of reports on the utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities, documentation and publication-related matters, translation- and interpretation-related matters, and information technology. In order to contribute to a coherent and integrated consideration of the interlinked issues emerging from these requests that are of a technical nature, the Secretary-General has decided to submit a single report instead of several separate reports.

* A/57/150.

** The present report is the first attempt to present information and analysis in a single consolidated report on a wide range of issues requested by the General Assembly under the agenda item "Pattern of conferences". As a result, preparation of the manuscript could not be finished before the deadline for submission of reports to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. The report exceeds the 16-page limit for the length of reports originating in the Secretariat owing to the consolidation of several separate reports into one response.

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Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	Calendar of conferences and meetings	3–54	3
	A. Adoption of the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 2003	3	3
	B. Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities	4–50	3
	1. Meeting statistics of United Nations organs	4–22	3
	2. Consultations with/letters to bodies concerning utilization of the conference services available to them	23	7
	3. Provision of interpretation services to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States	24–34	7
	4. Improved utilization of conference facilities	35–49	9
	(a) United Nations Office at Nairobi	35	9
	(b) United Nations Centre in Bangkok	36–49	10
	5. Improved coordination and utilization of conference services	50	12
	C. Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243	51–54	12
III.	Documentation- and publication-related matters	55–92	13
	A. Submission of documentation	55–70	13
	B. Distribution of documentation	71	15
	C. Compliance with the regulations concerning page limits	72–86	15
	D. Issuance of all documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Arabic and in other working languages of the Commission	87–92	19
IV.	Translation- and interpretation-related matters	93–117	22
	A. Videoconferencing and remote interpretation	93–105	22
	B. Utilization of new technologies	106	24
	C. Language services posts	107–117	24
	1. Temporary assistance posts	107	24
	2. Employment of retirees	108	24
	3. Employment of interpreters with desired language combinations	109–117	24
V.	Information technology	118–139	25
Annexes			
I.	Meeting statistics of a core sample of United Nations bodies		29
II.	Statistics on the provision of conference services for meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States at the four duty stations		47
III.	Requests for meetings during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly		50

I. Introduction

1. During its organizational session on 22 March 2002, the Committee on Conferences agreed that several subjects that required reporting in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/242 could be dealt with in a consolidated report of the Secretary-General.

2. The present report is prepared accordingly. For ease of reference, it follows the agenda of the Committee (A/AC.172/2002/1). The subjects handled by the report are either of an analytical or statistical nature or are included in response to ongoing mandates and reporting requirements. Certain requests for substantive analysis that deal with the overall managing, functioning and capacity of Conference Services have been reported on separately in A/57/289.

II. Calendar of conferences and meetings

A. Adoption of the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 2003

3. The draft revised calendar for 2003 will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

B. Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities

(1) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs

4. Annex I to the present document contains statistical data on the planned and actual utilization of conference resources allocated to a core sample of bodies that met in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi in 2001, compiled in accordance with the experimental methodology adopted as final by the Committee on Conferences at its 348th meeting, on 18 May 1993. The data include compliance and availability indices for assessing compliance with the deadlines for the submission of pre-session documentation and availability of such documentation for bodies based in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

5. In compliance with the request of the Committee at its substantive session in 1999, utilization factors for a three-year period are provided and organs are listed in the order of their utilization factors for 2001.

6. In general, the bodies in the sample meet on a regular basis and it may be assumed that their performance is a reflection of United Nations bodies as a whole. Clearly, however, such indicators as the utilization factor can depend on particulars that do not apply to all United Nations bodies.

7. In accordance with decisions of the Committee on Conferences, the time utilized for informal meetings or consultations held before the start or after the adjournment of officially scheduled meetings, when utilizing the same services and with due notification given to the Secretariat, is not included as time lost owing to late starting or early ending of meetings.

8. An explanation of column headings that appear in annex I and in the analysis below follows:

A Number of meetings planned by a given organ at a scheduled session;

B Number of additional meetings held during the session;

C Number of meetings cancelled during the session;

D Number of meetings actually held;

E Number of reassignments;

F Amount of time lost owing to late starting/early ending (hours and minutes rounded to the nearest five minutes, e.g., 5.25 = 5 hours and 25 minutes);

MR Meeting ratio, calculated as meetings held as a percentage of meetings available to a given body (D as a percentage of A);

PAF Planning accuracy factor, calculated as meetings planned, minus additional meetings, minus cancellations, all as a percentage of meetings planned (A minus B minus C as a percentage of A);

UF Utilization factor, the percentage of available conference resources actually used by the organ in question. The utilization factor is based on the following calculation:

$$\frac{(A+B) - (C-E) - (F/3)}{(A+B)} = UF$$

In the foregoing calculation, the number of hours lost as a result of late starting and early ending is converted into the equivalent of meetings lost by dividing the total by three, as the standard meeting time is three hours. The number of reassignments is subtracted from the number of cancelled meetings. The difference between the two and the number of meetings lost are then subtracted from the sum of meetings planned and additional meetings held. The result is expressed as a percentage of the sum of meetings planned and additional meetings held;

CI Compliance index, calculated as the percentage of pre-session documentation issued in accordance with the six-week rule;

AI Availability index, calculated as the actual rate of delivery presented on a week-by-week basis.

Analysis of the statistics

9. A breakdown by body of the utilization statistics referred to below is contained in annex I.

10. The overall utilization factor for 2001 was 74 per cent. This figure is computed by totalling the data in the six columns for all bodies in the four duty stations and treating them as if they reflected a single body, as follows:

Duty station	A	B	C	D	E	F (minutes)	1999 UF	2000 UF	2001 UF
New York	1 195	36	237	994	109	55 230	79	79	65
Geneva	632	40	48	624	0	10 170	84	87	84
Vienna	216	0	6	216	0	5 150	88	83	84
Nairobi	30	25	0	55	0	292	84	100	97
	2 073	**101**	**291**	**1 889**	**109**	**70 842**	**81**	**81**	**74**

11. The overall utilization factor for 2001, 74 per cent, is 7 percentage points lower than in 2000 and 1999. Although there was a decrease in utilization of 3 percentage points in both Geneva and Nairobi, Vienna increased by one point. The sharp drop of 14 percentage points in New York is the main cause of the overall decrease. Out of the 994 meetings held, the equivalent of 307 meetings were not utilized owing to late starting and early ending. Even though the total number of meetings held in 2001 was close to 300 less than in 2000, as a result of late starting and early ending the equivalent of 88 more meetings were wasted in 2001 in New York than in 2000.

12. The utilization factors for the bodies in the sample for the period from 1999 to 2001 are presented below in tabular form for purposes of comparison:

Utilization factor (percentage)	Number of sessions		
	1999	2000	2001
0-19	-	1	2
20-29	-	-	1
30-39	-	1	1
40-49	-	3	2
50-59	-	3	8
60-69	7	8	12
70-79	22	13	14
80-100	42	48	36
Total number	71	77	76

13. As to compliance with the benchmark, in 1999 and 2000, 59 per cent and 62 per cent of the bodies, respectively, showed a utilization factor of 80 per cent or higher. In 2001, 47 per cent of the bodies in the sample utilized their available conference-servicing resources on or above the benchmark.

14 The following is a breakdown of the meeting ratios of the bodies in the sample for 2001:

Percentage	*Number of sessions*
10-19	-
20-29	-
30-39	-
40-49	1
50-59	5
60-69	4
70-79	6
80-89	16
90-100+	41
Total	**76**

15. Thus, in 2001, 75 per cent of the bodies in the sample had meeting ratios above 80 per cent.

16. The following is a breakdown of the planning accuracy factors of the bodies in the sample for 2001:

Percentage	*Number of sessions*
0-39	4
40-49	1
50-59	5
60-69	7
70-79	6
80-89	18
90-100	35
Total	**76**

17. Thus, in 2001, 67 per cent of the bodies had planning accuracy factors above 80 per cent.

Consideration of changes to the methodology

18. The Committee on Conferences noted in its report (A/56/32) the concerns expressed by chairpersons of intergovernmental bodies on the methodology used to calculate the utilization factor and looked forward to receiving a further analysis and review of the indices, including possible benchmark figures for the planning accuracy factor and the meeting ratio, among others, and a measurement of the degree to which unutilized services were reallocated.

19. The meeting ratio (MR) is a complex index; its meaning and interpretation can vary depending on how the ultimate figure is arrived at. A perfect score of 100 per cent can be the result of no meetings added or cancelled, indicating perfect planning, or can just as well be the result of an equal number of additional and cancelled meetings, far from being an indication of good planning. Still, a meeting ratio of 100

per cent would mean that the overall number of meetings needed to service a session is equal to the original number of meetings planned. Thereby, 100 per cent may be considered to be a meaningful benchmark.

20. The planning accuracy factor (PAF) has a more straightforward meaning; additional meetings as well as cancellations reduce the index. It is a matter of choice to decide what is acceptable in terms of additions and cancellations. A body that had planned 10 meetings, then actually added one and cancelled one, i.e. still held 10 meetings as planned, would have a PAF of 80 per cent. This, however, would still not indicate how well the meeting time of the meetings actually held was utilized. That is only factored in by the utilization factor (UF), it being the more comprehensive indicator. Thus, while a PAF of 100 per cent would be desirable, a PAF of 80 per cent seems like an acceptable benchmark.

21. In view of the foregoing, a meeting ratio of 100 per cent and a planning accuracy factor of 80 per cent may be considered recommended benchmarks. As the utilization factor is a complex index that incorporates all the aspects of the MR and the PAF and includes utilization of meeting time as a factor as well, it is clearly superior as an overall measurement of utilization to both the MR and the PAF and thus should be kept as the primary index to judge utilization performance of intergovernmental bodies.

22. Committee chairpersons and secretaries also argued that there should be a differentiation as to how to account for the time lost owing to late starting and early ending. It is accepted that a late start can reflect lack of discipline or leadership on the part of the secretary or the chairperson, but it is argued that the early ending can be an indicator of the effective conduct of business or the result of the unpredictable nature of intergovernmental or expert negotiations. It is noted, however, that in order to avoid early endings, there can be contingencies, that is, ad hoc adjustments foreseen in the programme of work, such as the inclusion of additional agenda items for a particular meeting in case the list of speakers is exhausted sooner than anticipated, and the rescheduling or combining of meetings for which not enough speakers are inscribed. In any event, in requesting meeting resources, bodies should take account of their experience at previous sessions, including the incidence of early endings, which should be factored in. In other words, better planning and flexible adjusting of the programme of work can help to reduce time lost owing to early ending. Thus, it would not be justified to consider a weighted system to account for such time lost.

(2) Consultations with/letters to bodies concerning utilization of the conference services available to them

23. An oral presentation by the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences will be made to the Committee at its substantive session in compliance with the request of the General Assembly set forth in section II, paragraph 6, of its resolution 56/242, concerning the utilization of conference services.

(3) Provision of interpretation services to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States

24. Meetings held by regional and other major groupings of Member States are provided with interpretation services on an ad hoc basis, in accordance with established practice, that is, from existing resources not used owing mostly to the

cancellation of meetings of calendar bodies. In paragraph 11 of its resolution 54/248 B, the General Assembly decided to include all necessary resources in the budget for the biennium 2000-2001 to provide such services. Furthermore, in section II, paragraph 4, of its resolution 55/222, the Assembly reiterated the decision and request for the ensuing biennium. A report on the item (A/56/213) was issued in accordance with paragraph 11 of resolution 54/248 B.

25. In section II, paragraph 18, of its resolution 56/242, the Assembly decided to include all necessary resources in the budget for the biennium 2002-2003 to provide interpretation services for meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States upon request by those groups, on an ad hoc basis, in accordance with established practice, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, through the Committee on Conferences, a report on the implementation of that decision.

26. The statistical data and analysis, submitted pursuant to the aforementioned request deal with meetings of regional and other major groupings, including a breakdown by regional group. The period covered by the report is from July 2001 to April 2002 in order to ensure timely issuance of the report in compliance with the six-week rule.

Statistical data and analysis

27. With regard to New York, for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 April 2002, 100 per cent of the 747 requests for facilities alone were met. The need for groups to meet outside traditional working hours continued. However, with the issuance of ST/IC/2002/13 of 28 February 2002, conference facilities have no longer been provided beyond regular meeting hours. Nevertheless, 101 requests in March and 100 requests in April 2002 were complied with, compared with 73 and 107 for the corresponding two-month period of 2001. As to the provision of interpretation services, out of 207 requests, 201 were met, or a total of 97 per cent.

28. With respect to Geneva, during the same period, 100 per cent of the 42 requests for interpretation and facilities were met. At Vienna, 100 per cent of the 231 requests for facilities only were met. In Nairobi, 100 per cent of the 31 requests for facilities were met. No request for interpretation services was made in Vienna and Nairobi. (For the breakdown by groupings, see annex II below.)

29. As in previous years, the main difficulty in providing services during this 10-month period continued to be: (a) an increase in the number of scheduled meetings over previous years, including heavy activity prior to and in preparation for special sessions of the General Assembly; (b) an ongoing tendency towards lengthier and more frequent meetings of the Security Council, additional and sometimes parallel meetings of its working groups and special committees alone (472 over the reporting period, separate and apart from other Security Council plenary meetings, which are clearly very difficult to predict); and (c) the need to reschedule the general debate of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly and the postponement of the special session of the General Assembly on children owing to the events of 11 September 2001.

30. Annex III contains statistics for the four duty stations.

31. In order to provide services and facilities whenever possible to regional and other major groupings, the responsible sections of the Department of General

Assembly Affairs and Conference Services at each duty station continued to work closely with the secretaries and organizers of calendar or other meetings with confirmed services so as to have adequate notice of cancellations or other instances where services might not be needed for the full three-hour block. By providing this information ahead of time, more regional groups, which often meet for less than three hours, were able to receive the services they needed. Coordinating this information with the regional groups is the key to providing interpretation when conference services are so stretched.

32. As indicated in paragraph 25 above, there was an increase in the percentage of meetings provided with interpretation despite the volume of scheduled and other intergovernmental meetings in 2001-2002. A significant, limiting factor in providing facilities to meetings of regional and other major groupings has been the relative shortage of conference and meeting rooms at Headquarters in the most recent reporting period, especially related to the upkeep of and repairs to the General Assembly Hall and other meeting rooms. In addition, regional groups can no longer meet after normal meeting hours. All this has required very intensive coordination between the requesters and Conference Services in order to accommodate requests at such a high percentage.

Conclusion

33. The percentage of meetings held by regional and other major groupings that were provided with interpretation for the reporting period continued to increase from 92 per cent during the period 2000-2001 to 97 per cent for the current period for New York, that is, July 2001 to April 2002. Overall, for all four duty stations, 98 per cent of the requests for interpretation were met.

34. Although in its resolution 56/242 the General Assembly decided to include all necessary resources in the budget for the biennium 2002-2003 to provide interpretation services for meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States upon request by those groups, and despite the fact that it noted with concern the difficulties experienced by some Member States owing to the lack of conference services for some meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States, no provision for interpretation services for such groups has been specifically earmarked by the Assembly in the programme budget. In order to put these services on a more predictable and formal basis and to avoid daily scheduling difficulties, the Assembly would have to include corresponding expenses in the programme budget for the next biennium 2004-2005, thus facilitating the programming of the available conference-servicing resources.

(4) Improved utilization of conference facilities

(a) United Nations Office at Nairobi

35. A report on the matter will be submitted as an addendum to the present report.

(b) United Nations Centre in Bangkok

Background

36. Pursuant to paragraph 116 of General Assembly resolution 56/253, wherein the Secretary-General was requested to pursue his efforts to maximize the use of the United Nations Centre in Bangkok, including its external use, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, the following report summarizes such efforts.

Promotion of use by United Nations agencies and offices

37. The Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has repeatedly, through the regular inter-agency meetings, publicized the Centre, and offered its facilities and services to the other United Nations agencies and offices. As a result, many agencies and related offices, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), CityNet, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization used the Conference Centre as the venue for a number of their events in 2001. There has been a tendency over the last couple of years towards an increased number of inter-agency related meetings in which ESCAP is, more often than not, a participant.

38. Major activities organized in 2001 included: the National Forum for Thai Judicial Officers on Environment (UNEP); the Regional Meeting on Fighting Urban Air Pollution (ADB, World Bank); World Environment Day (UNEP); the Third Asian Development Forum (ADB, ESCAP and World Bank); Human Development Report (UNDP); and CityNet Congress 2001 (CityNet, ESCAP).

39. During April and May 2002, the Mid-term Review of UNCTAD X was held in the Centre, in cooperation with UNCTAD and the Thai Government. Similarly, the United Nations Population Fund and ESCAP will jointly organize the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in December 2002. In addition, outside users, such as the International School in Bangkok, will be using the facilities for the model United Nations convention in November 2002.

Promotion of use by Member States and other organizations

40. In the light of the excellent facilities and the attentive and professional services provided by the staff at the Centre, coupled with the gradual recovery of the local economy, many offices of the Thai Government have repeatedly used the Centre for their various activities. The Governments of several other Member States, such as Australia, Japan, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, have also used the Centre's facilities and services.

41. Significant events organized in 2001 for outside users included: International Conference on New Biotechnology Food and Crops; Science, Safety and Society:

Workshop on Science and Technology for Human Development; Forum of the Annual Economic Review, National Congress of Law; Information Technology Law Seminar; Meeting and Training on Weapons of Mass Destruction; and Workshop for AusAID Project Identification: Mission for ASEAN.

42. An increasing number of civil organizations and private sector entities are now utilizing the services and facilities of the Centre.

Publicity

43. Publicity work for the Centre has been carried out in the form of regular briefings and guided tours, organized jointly with the United Nations Information Services in Bangkok. The target groups cover a very wide range, from university students and teachers to officials representing various Thai government institutions, as well as a range of United Nations offices and both local residents and visitors from abroad.

Meeting packages

44. Following the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on preparing promotional packages and with the good cooperation of the contracted caterer, ESCAP has been able to offer very attractive competitive meeting packages to potential outside users.

Improvement in services

45. While waiting for the vacant P-2 post in the Conference Services Unit to be filled through competitive examinations, ESCAP obtained the services of a short-term local consultant to develop a marketing plan for the Centre. The P-2 post was filled on 20 May 2002. In addition, four outsourced technical staff have been recruited to assist with the audio-visual and physical/exhibition arrangements in the Centre. The Centre now provides a questionnaire to all external users, soliciting their evaluation of the services offered. The result of these evaluations has been overwhelmingly positive.

Improvement of the facilities

46. A state-of-the-art Internet Café was established during 2001 on the main circulation floor of the Centre and has been extremely well received by both delegates and visitors.

47. ESCAP will continue to monitor the adequacy of the meeting room facilities during the current biennium with a view to increasing utilization.

Conclusion

48. In 2001, a total of 594 events were organized at the United Nations Centre in Bangkok (415 ESCAP, 89 non-ESCAP and 90 various catering functions). These figures show a marked increase over previous years, i.e. 499 events in 2000, 423 in 1999, 374 in 1998 and 353 in 1997. ESCAP projects that, in 2002, around 630 events will be organized in the Centre.

49. Given the excellent facilities and the general level of services provided, it is expected that the utilization of the Centre will steadily increase in the years to come.

(5) Improved coordination and utilization of conference services

50. A report on improving the performance of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services will be issued separately.

C. Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243

51. In section I, paragraph 7, of its resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985, the General Assembly decided that no subsidiary organ of the Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

52. Every year, a certain number of requests for exceptions to that rule are received. In accordance with established practice, the requests are first submitted to the Committee on Conferences, which then makes a recommendation to the Assembly.

53. At its substantive session of 1986, the Committee on Conferences reviewed the procedure by which it dealt with such requests and decided that, in future, the following procedure should be adopted:[1]

(a) Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly wishing to request explicit authorization from the Assembly to meet at Headquarters during the session should write to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, except in unforeseen circumstances, before the substantive session of the Committee; the letter should be circulated to all members of the Committee, together with appropriate servicing information provided by the Secretariat;

(b) The request should contain the reason or reasons why the authorization is being requested and/or the reason or reasons why the organ concerned did not finish its work during the time allotted to it, in compliance with the 1 September deadline for the completion of reports of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, as laid down in section I, paragraph 6, of resolution 40/243;

(c) The request should also explain why it is necessary to meet during the General Assembly and should specify, to the extent possible, the number of meetings required;

(d) In the event that approval is forthcoming, all such meetings would be allocated conference services on an "as available" basis, from within existing resources, in such a way that the work of the General Assembly and its Main Committees is not impeded.

54. Annex III to the present report contains the requests received to date from subsidiary organs of the General Assembly to meet at Headquarters during the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly, as well as the relevant statistical information. Requests received after the submission of the present report will be issued in an addendum.

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/41/32), para. 64.

III. Documentation- and publication-related matters

A. Submission of documentation

Measures to strengthen accountability and responsibility within the Secretariat in the submission of documentation

Introduction

55. The General Assembly, in section III, paragraphs 10 and 11, of its resolution 56/242, requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on measures taken to ensure full implementation of the report on measures taken by the Secretariat to strengthen responsibility and accountability in the submission of documentation, and to develop an effective accountability and responsibility system within the Secretariat in order to ensure timely submission of documents for processing, and to report thereon, through the Committee on Conferences, to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. The following report is submitted in compliance with those requests.

56. The Secretariat as a whole bears a responsibility for seeking to improve the documentation situation within the area of its authority as Member States do within theirs. The Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services endeavours to reach out to the author entities for closer cooperation and communication, including early warning and situation assessment.

57. The following measures have been taken and are being strengthened to ensure more timely submission as well as compliance with other documentation-related rules.

Improving timeliness of submission

58. By the terms of General Assembly resolutions 53/208, 54/248, 55/222 and 56/242, if a report is submitted late to Conference Services, the reasons therefor should be included in a footnote to the document. Despite repeated reminders, a substantial amount of late submissions still did not contain the footnote. In such cases, the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services now inserts a standardized footnote to indicate that the document was submitted without the required explanation.

59. The reasons for late submission are being tracked and analysed by the Department. Any findings are fed back to the author entities, which have been urged to review such feedback at an adequate level to facilitate future improvements. They are also reminded to comply strictly with the rule regarding footnotes on late submissions.

Quantitative evaluation of performance

60. Hitherto, quantitative indications of the timeliness of submission and issuance of documentation have not been prepared. A computerized methodology has now been developed to summarize statistically the timeliness of document submission for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs.

61. For the Assembly and the Council, the recorded performance has been provided to each author entity to enable a quantitative summary and comparison of performance.

Format

62. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 52/214, 53/208, 54/248, 55/222 and 56/242, requested that reports originating in the Secretariat should include, where appropriate, (a) a summary of the report; (b) consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions; and (c) relevant background information. Moreover, it decided that all documents submitted to legislative bodies for consideration and action should have conclusions and recommendations in bold print.

63. Until recently, these requirements had not been applied to documents for organs other than the General Assembly. The Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services has now clarified the policy and applies it across the board to all official documents.

64. Inter-office memoranda on strict compliance with these rules have been sent to all author entities. Submissions that fail to comply with these rules are corrected by the Department, where possible, or are returned for resubmission.

Page limits

65. The General Assembly, in paragraph 15 of its resolution 53/208 B, invited all intergovernmental bodies to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of further reducing the length of their reports from 32 to 20 pages without adversely affecting either the quality of presentation or the content of the reports.

66. The Committee on Conferences noted in paragraph 109 of its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session[2] that, although the number and proportion of documents issued in accordance with the established and desirable page limits had increased, compliance with the limitation targets for both intergovernmental and Secretariat documents continued to be only partial. In paragraph 110, it further noted that documents that were significantly in excess of the page limit, especially when submitted late, created an additional burden for the processing services and could jeopardize timely issuance and compromise quality. Efforts to reduce further the length of documents should therefore be concentrated on those cases in which page limits were applicable or desirable, since such documents made up 50 per cent of all documentation and accounted for close to 80 per cent of their total volume.

67. The Secretary-General has reiterated his instructions to all departments, offices and other entities to adhere to the page limits. Justifiable requests for waivers for major policy documents and other documents exceeding 7,200 words have to be signed personally by the heads of departments. Such waivers are granted only in exceptional cases. In addition, all reports which do not originate in the Secretariat are now assumed to fall under the 20-page guideline.

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/55/32).

Other measures

68. When a document is submitted very close to the scheduled parliamentary deliberation, Conference Services is compelled to suspend work on earlier submissions to accommodate the rush job, causing disruption and making human errors and oversights more likely. Even more important, it results in late issuance of the timely submissions. The disciplinary dilemma is, while the current practice victimizes early submissions, refusal to expedite late submissions will penalize the intergovernmental organs.

69. The current budget constraints have seriously reduced the ability of Conference Services to expedite late submissions by arranging night and weekend shifts. Apart from timely submission of documents, therefore, the provision by author departments of accurate document forecasts has become more essential for advance planning and more efficient use of the reduced resources allocated to Conference Services.

70. In general, the practice of accommodating time-sensitive late submissions over submissions made in accordance with the rules needs to be adjusted. Even when late submissions are accommodated, the author entities should be aware that priority cannot be accorded to such submissions, which may result in untimely issuance.

B. Distribution of documentation

71. A note by the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in the six official languages on the United Nations web site was issued as document A/C.5/56/37.

C. Compliance with the regulations concerning page limits

Introduction

72. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit every two years, through the Committee on Conferences, updated information on the number and length of documents. The information contained herein for the years 2000-2001 follows the reporting format of documents A/51/268, A/AC.172/1998/CRP.4 and A/AC.172/2000/CRP.2, in which were analysed the number and length of documents for the years 1995, 1996-1997 and 1998-1999, respectively.

Developments concerning documentation policy

73. In its resolution 53/208 B, the General Assembly stressed the need for compliance with the existing page limits for documents and invited all intergovernmental bodies to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of further reducing the length of their reports from 32 to 20 pages. The Assembly called upon the Secretariat to make more rigorous its procedures for obtaining waivers to the 16-page rule for documents originating in the Secretariat, while maintaining the necessary degree of flexibility, with a view to encouraging author departments to reduce the length of their submissions while maintaining high standards of quality.

74. In a memorandum dated 25 April 2002 to members of the Senior Management Group, the Secretary-General directed the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services not to accept for processing drafts of reports that exceeded the 16-page limit (7,200 words) for all reports originating in the Secretariat. He further requested that members of the Senior Management Group clear drafts prepared under their authority and sign justifiable requests for waivers, which would be granted only in exceptional cases by the Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services.

75. In section III, paragraph 6, of its resolution 55/222, the General Assembly reiterated its request that the Secretary-General direct all departments to include, where appropriate, the following elements in reports originating in the Secretariat:

(a) A summary of the report;

(b) Consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions;

(c) Relevant background information.

76. In paragraph 7 of the same resolution, it reiterated that all documents submitted to legislative organs by the Secretariat and expert bodies for consideration and action should have conclusions and recommendations in bold print.

77. In addition, in paragraph 9, the General Assembly reiterated its decision that, if a report is submitted late to Conference Services, the reasons therefor should be included in a footnote to the document.

78. For further information on steps taken in this area, see paragraphs 51-66 above.

Length of documents

79. In accordance with the method used in previous reports on the length of documents and in order to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible of the degree of compliance with the existing page limits, statistical information has been compiled on the number and length of documents issued in 2000 and 2001 for the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. As in earlier reports, the data gathered refer only to documents issued strictly under the symbols of those three principal organs (A/-, S/- and E/-). Documents issued under the symbols of subsidiary bodies of those organs, including their main and sessional committees, are excluded. Meeting records, official records, resolutions, information documents and corrigenda are also excluded.

80. The documents have been categorized as follows:

(a) *Category A*: reports originating in the Secretariat;

(b) *Category B*: major policy documents, such as the proposed programme budget and reports not originating in the Secretariat. This group includes reports of subsidiary organs and of special rapporteurs, reports in which replies from Governments are compiled and other documents whose length, in a strict sense, cannot be controlled by the Secretariat, such as agendas, notes transmitting biographical information of candidates for elections, programmes of work and similar documents;

(c) *Category C*: communications from Member States;

(d) *Category D*: draft resolutions and draft decisions.

81. The information below combines statistics for the years 2000 and 2001 and can be summarized as follows:

	Documents		*Pages*	
Category	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
A	1 455	29	14 310	40
B	1 068	21	13 666	38
C	2 030	40	6 921	19
D	475	10	853	3
Total	**5 028**	**100**	**35 750**	**100**

As seen under category A, the length of about one third of the documents included in the sample is subject to control by the Secretariat. The length of the remaining documents reflects the practices and decisions of intergovernmental bodies and the Member States themselves. Compared to the two previous years, the number of documents stayed at the same level, while the total number of pages decreased by 27 per cent. Consequently, the length of an average document — about 7 pages — is 3 pages less than in previous years. The ratios between the categories are unchanged: categories A and B account for half the total number of documents and three quarters of the total number of pages.

Category A: reports originating in the Secretariat

82. The breakdown by length of reports originating in the Secretariat is as follows:

Category A

	Documents		*Pages*	
Length (pages)	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
1-16	1 210	83	6 452	45
17-20	84	6	1 536	11
21-24	38	2	856	6
25-32	44	3	1 242	9
33-50	51	4	1 997	14
51-100	23	2	1 426	10
100+	5	0	801	5
Total	**1 455**	**100**	**14 310**	**100**

Compared to the period 1998-1999, the number of documents in category A went up by 18 per cent, while the total number of pages went down by 2 per cent. Close to 80 per cent of the Secretariat documents continue to comply with the limit of 16

pages, up by 6 per cent from the two previous years; however, because of their length, the remaining documents continue to account for 55 per cent of the workload originating in the Secretariat. Documents with manuscripts in excess of the page limit are accepted for processing only if the heads of the author departments concerned provide written justification for the need to exceed the established limit. The Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, while providing guidance and advice on how to reduce the length of such manuscripts, decides on the granting of waivers to the sixteen-page rule on a case-by-case basis.

Category B: major policy documents and reports not originating in the Secretariat

83. The breakdown by length of major policy documents and reports not originating in the Secretariat is as follows:

Category B

	Documents		*Pages*	
Length (pages)	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
1-16	895	84	3 818	28
17-20	31	3	586	4
21-24	33	3	733	5
25-32	28	3	813	6
33-50	35	3	1 406	10
51-100	29	3	1 985	15
100+	17	1	4 325	32
Total	**1 068**	**100**	**13 666**	**100**

Category B includes documents of intergovernmental bodies. As a result of numerous invitations of the General Assembly for subsidiary bodies to reduce the length of their reports from the desired limit of 32 pages to 20 pages, this category saw a reduction, as compared to the previous two years, in the number of pages by 41 per cent. While 87 per cent of the documents were within the desired page limit, close to 70 per cent of the workload in this category involves documents that are longer than 20 pages.

Category C: communications from Member States

Category D: draft resolutions and decisions

84. Although communications from Member States and draft resolutions and decisions are not subject to length limitations, their breakdown by length is indicated below for information purposes. In terms of communications, the General Assembly has reviewed the matter and appealed to Member States to exercise restraint in their requests for the circulation of communications as United Nations documents and to keep their submissions as brief as possible.

Category C

Length (pages)	Documents		Pages	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1-16	1 995	98	5 302	77
17-20	11	1	203	3
21-24	4	0	90	1
25-32	5	0	141	2
33-50	8	1	333	5
51-100	6	0	377	5
100+	1	0	475	7
Total	**2 030**	**100**	**6 921**	**100**

Category D

Length (pages)	Documents	Pages
1-16	475	853
17-50	0	0
Total	**475**	**853**

Conclusions

85. Although the number and proportion of documents issued in accordance with the established and desirable page limits have increased, compliance with the limitation targets for both intergovernmental and Secretariat documents continues to be partial.

86. Documents which are significantly in excess of the page limit, especially when submitted late, create an additional burden for the processing services, can jeopardize timely issuance and may compromise quality. Member States have repeatedly called for the timely issuance of documentation and respect for simultaneous distribution of all language versions and have raised quality concerns. Bearing all this in mind, efforts to reduce further the length of documents should concentrate on those cases where page limits are applicable or desirable since such documents make up 50 per cent of all documentation and account for close to 80 per cent of the total volume.

D. Issuance of all documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Arabic and in other working languages of the Commission

Introduction

87. In part III, paragraph 17, of its resolution 56/242 of 24 December 2001 and in paragraph 124 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure fully the issuance of all documents and

publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Arabic, which is most relevant to the requirements of the Member States of the region, as well as in the other working languages of the Commission, to meet the requirements of readers outside the region, as appropriate, and to report thereon to the Assembly by its fifty-seventh session.

88. In its resolution 56/277 of 27 March 2002, the General Assembly urged ESCWA to comply with all relevant provisions of Commission resolution 44 (IV) of 28 April 1977, whereby it decided, inter alia, that all documents to be submitted to it should, as far as possible, be drafted in Arabic. In addition, it took note of the note by the Secretariat (A/C.5/56/19) and looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the progress achieved in the production of documents and publications in Arabic.

89. In compliance with the requests of the General Assembly, the present note provides updated information on the current situation regarding the use of Arabic and other languages for ESCWA documents and publications and indicates steps to be taken for improving their issuance in Arabic.

Remedial measures taken to improve the situation

90. In order to improve the situation and to increase the number of documents issued in Arabic, the following measures have been introduced in 2002:

(a) Enforcing implementation of ESCWA resolution 20 (II) of 9 May 1975, in which it is requested that all other technical and non-technical documents issued by the Commission should be translated into Arabic;

(b) Requesting submitting divisions and consultants to draft more documents in Arabic;

(c) Increasing the resources available for translation;

(d) Reviewing the total number of publications to be produced and spreading the workload evenly over the biennium;

(e) Making Arabic drafting skills a desirable condition for post applicants;

(f) Revitalizing the ESCWA Committee on Publications;

(g) Undertaking activities aimed at optimum utilization of the Arabic language in ESCWA, including workshops, meetings and staff training;

(h) Ensuring, through better planning and monitoring, that the majority of ESCWA documents are drafted in Arabic and that those drafted in English are translated into Arabic in a timely manner.

Current situation

91. The current situation in ESCWA regarding languages used in the preparation of ESCWA documents and publications is as shown in tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1
Use of different languages for the preparation of ESCWA documents

	Actual for 1998-1999					
	Drafted		*Translated*		*Published*	
Language	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*
Arabic	107	3 608	92	2 788	199	6 396
English	146	8 271	61	991	207	9 262
French	-	-	1	25	1	25
Total	**253**	**11 879**	**154**	**3 804**	**407**	**15 683**

	Estimated for 2000-2001					
	Drafted		*Translated*		*Published*	
Language	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*
Arabic	130	3 710	100	4 984	230	8 604
English	160	8 534	63	1 067	223	9 601
French	-	-	2	58	2	58
Total	**290**	**12 244**	**165**	**6 109**	**455**	**18 263**

	Anticipated for 2002-2003					
	Drafted		*Translated*		*Published*	
Language	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*	*Documents*	*Pages*
Arabic	118	3 400	96	3 800	214	7 200
English	150	8 200	62	1 000	212	9 200
French	-	-	1	25	1	25
Total	**268**	**11 600**	**159**	**4 825**	**427**	**16 425**

Table 2
Ratio of use of different languages for preparation of documents
(percentage based on the number of pages)

	1998-1999			*2000-2001**			*2002-2003**		
Language	*Drafted*	*Translated*	*Published*	*Drafted*	*Translated*	*Published*	*Drafted*	*Translated*	*Published*
Arabic	30	73	41	30	82	47	29	79	44
English	70	26	59	70	17	53	71	21	56
French	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

* Estimated.

Conclusion

92. **It is the intention of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to increase the percentage of documents available in Arabic from 47 per cent in 2000-2001 to 80 per cent in 2002-2003 and to 100 per cent during the biennium to 2004-2005.**

IV. Translation- and interpretation-related matters

A. Videoconferencing and remote interpretation

Introduction

93. The present report is submitted in accordance with paragraphs 108 and 109 of the report of the Committee on Conferences to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.[3] In paragraph 108, the Committee requested the Secretariat to assess future advances in the videoconferencing and communications areas to determine whether they could offer solutions to the outstanding technical problems of remote interpretation. In paragraph 109, it also requested that a report on developments in those areas, as well as any activities in other fields of remote interpretation carried out by other international organizations, be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

Outstanding problems related to remote interpretation

94. The report of the Secretary-General on remote interpretation (A/56/188) showed that the satellite link remained stable and provided very good sound and video transmission when the ground segment was via hard wire, but that ISDN (integrated services digital network)-based video transmission required further attention.

95. With ISDN transmission, the sound quality was generally acceptable, but image interruptions were experienced. In addition, interpreters were disoriented by the lack of synchronization between sound and image, and the image on which they relied was not always clear or stable, causing loss of concentration.

Videoconferencing as a solution to outstanding problems of remote interpretation

96. Both the United Nations and international agencies and organizations that are not part of the United Nations system have been routinely organizing live videoconferences which include interpretation in order to make possible a dialogue with one or more individuals or to enable groups of people at different locations to interact. Videoconferencing is a widely accepted tool based on proven technology.

97. In such situations, end-users and interpreters are present in the same room. The speaker is at a remote location, while the interpretation takes place on-site, with the statements delivered through the videoconference monitor. This process is straightforward, usually of short duration and is routinely applied. From the interpretation standpoint, nonetheless, the only similarity it bears to remote

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/56/32).

interpretation is that it involves interpreting statements delivered through a television monitor.

98. Remote interpretation, however, is a more complex concept since the interpreters are located away from the end-users, who also deliver the statements to be interpreted. In a remote interpretation situation, sound and picture signals would normally be sent via ISDN phone lines from the conference location to where the interpreters are located. The interpreters would then interpret the statements thus delivered into the five other official languages and the five language versions of that statement would in turn be simultaneously sent back to the end-users.

99. This technical approach, using videoconferencing equipment, is the one that was adopted for the last remote experiment, in April 2001. As long as such an approach is followed, the technical problems of remote interpretation will continue to be those connected with videoconferencing. As a result, videoconferencing does not offer technical solutions to the technical problems of remote interpretation.

100. A technical alternative would be the use of broadcast quality television links. Such an approach would resolve the outstanding image quality problems, but at a significantly higher cost. With the passage of time, however, image quality is bound to improve even with videoconferencing equipment.

Remote interpretation in other international organizations

101. While the concept is alive and well, from a practical point of view, remote interpretation, as opposed to videoconferencing-based interpretation, is still not part of the general picture. At the present time, it is not considered a priority in international organizations.

102. One exception is the European Parliament. On 29 May 2002, the Bureau of that organization adopted the note by its Secretary-General advocating the introduction of remote interpretation. However, the question as to whether, how and when the European Parliament will follow up on this recommendation is still unanswered.

103. In conformity with section IV of General Assembly resolution 56/242, the Secretariat is conducting a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis on the use of remote interpretation, covering, inter alia, issues pertaining to the working conditions of interpreters, which will be instrumental in that respect.

Conclusions

104. **Provision of interpretation during videoconferences is now commonplace both within and outside the United Nations system. Videoconference-based interpretation shares one important feature with remote interpretation, i.e. the interpretation is based on sound and a picture transmitted to a television monitor and in that sense it helps to facilitate the process of adaptation of interpreters for the purpose of remote interpretation. However, it does not solve the remaining problems, inherent to remote interpretation, related to the transmission quality of a point-to-point or point-to-multipoint communications link.**

105. **Nevertheless, the remaining image quality problems could be solved, as explained in paragraph 93 above. It is also likely that in two or three years, the**

present less-expensive, routinely used videoconferencing ISDN-based technology will also be able to solve them. However, the cost of broadcast quality television links is likely to decrease too. It is therefore safe to say that, within the next couple of years, the remaining problems related to image quality will be solved.

B. Utilization of new technologies

106. An update on projects and information technology systems is given in chapter V.

C. Language services posts

1. Temporary assistance posts

107. A report will be issued on the conversion of some temporary assistance posts under the agenda item entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003".

2. Employment of retirees

108. Updated information on this subject was requested under the agenda item entitled "Human resources management".

3. Employment of interpreters with desired language combinations

Introduction

109. The present report contains the results of the training initiative taken internally by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and approved for an initial period of one year by the General Assembly in August 2001 in section IV, paragraph 3, of its resolution 56/242. It shows the related financial arrangements and implications of the initiative as well as the need to continue it.

Training initiative

110. In August 2001, an internal initiative was approved by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services to reinstate on a trial basis, within existing budgetary resources, the interpreters' training programme, established in 1974 and suspended in 1992 owing to budgetary constraints.

111. The initiative targeted near-successful candidates in the interpreters' competitive examination who were close to performing at the requisite level but needed additional training and, most specifically, those who scored higher than the benchmark of 55 per cent and possessed those language combinations insufficiently represented on the roster of successful candidates.

112. In August 2001, four English-language applicants who met the requirements set for this training initiative were selected for in-house training for a period of three months.

113. After this initial training, the four trainees successfully passed an informal examination that prepared them for the United Nations English interpreters' competitive examination scheduled for January 2002.

114. Of the 22 candidates selected from a field of 74 applicants to take the English interpreters' competitive examination, 5 were successful, including 3 out of the 4 trainees. These figures clearly underscore the success of the training exercise.

115. The related resources for the one-year initiative amount to US$ 124,600, covering net salaries and, when appropriate, travel and assignment grant for 30 days.

116. The yearly financial implications of a training programme organized on a continuous basis along the lines of this successful initiative would follow a similar pattern for each booth involved in the training. It is not anticipated that more than two booths per year would be involved in the training. In other words, the cost of the training programme, on a two-booth-yearly basis, would be $249,100.

Conclusion

117. **In view of the foregoing and considering the need to provide high-quality interpretation within the United Nations system as well as the scarcity of available first-rate interpreters in some language combinations, it is recommended that the training programme for interpreters be established on a continuous basis.**

V. Information technology

Use of information technology in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services

Introduction

118. The present progress report reflects the status of the use and impact of information technology in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services as of 1 June 2002 in the following areas: computer-assisted translation, voice recognition, the e-Folder project, off-site translation, the Electronic Documents Registration Information and Tracking System (e-DRITS), the new stock control system for documents and publications, the digital recording system, electronic planning and servicing of meetings and computerized terminology data banks.

Computer-assisted translation

119. A working group on computer-assisted translation comprised of translators with experience in the translation of documents using specialized software has been established. The process of translation using such software requires managerial and workflow rearrangements related to the synchronized segmentation of documents in pairs of languages and the building-up and maintenance of high-quality translation memory. For computer-assisted translation to become fully operational, full electronic submission of documents is essential and the Department is actively pursuing that goal. The working group has already identified various types of documents especially suited for the computer-assisted translation approach, i.e. documents with repetitive content, such as budget reports and summary statements from the Security Council. In such cases, computer-assisted translation has potential for substantially increasing document consistency and, in the long term, could result in productivity gains.

Voice recognition

120. The Department is conducting a voice recognition software pilot project in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish in the corresponding Translation Services and Verbatim Reporting Sections. No commercially available voice recognition software exists for Russian at present. A decision on when to introduce this new working method in all the relevant services and sections will be taken once the evaluation has been completed and the current technical problems overcome.

E-Folder project

121. E-Folder is a project to migrate from the current paper-based referencing operation to electronic referencing. Electronic referencing means the utilization of computers in collecting, organizing and providing referencing materials to translators and revisers and all other clients. A preliminary template has been developed for the e-Folder. A Lotus Note out-tray has been set up. The project will become operational when the high-capacity server is set up and high-speed document scanners are provided.

Off-site translation

122. Off-site translation is not, properly speaking, a new technology, but rather a working method involving the translation of documentation originating in one location by translators present at another location.

123. The feasibility of off-site translation obviously depends on the availability of reliable communications links for the electronic transfer of documents and reference materials and access to relevant data banks (e.g. the optical disk system and the United Nations terminology system (UNTERM)). There are also connectivity requirements for the equipment used by off-site translators.

124. Off-site translation by freelance staff will be utilized as an alternative to in-house temporary assistance. If the arrangement proves to be workable, considerable savings can be achieved through the elimination of travel and daily subsistence allowance costs. It will take time to put the project in place since, at present, a fully electronic flow of documentation is not yet a reality, fundamental changes in referencing methods must await the acquisition of necessary hardware and software and many freelance translators still do not have Internet access.

Electronic Document Registration Information Tracking System (e-DRITS)

125. The e-DRITS system tracks the flow of documentation at all the stages of preparation, from the time documents are submitted by author departments to the time they are distributed. It has been in use for several years and areas where additional developments are required have been identified: document pre-submission and data interfacing with the system in the Documentation Programming and Monitoring Unit. As a coordinating system, e-DRITS has enabled managers to coordinate the documentation process with a high degree of accuracy. It is envisaged that further modifications will allow for full computerization of a number of statistical reports.

Stock control system for documents and publications

126. The stock control system consists of two modules: a database of publications and documents and a warehousing capability, carrying detailed information

regarding the location of boxes with publications at any given time as well as the number of the publications contained in the boxes.

127. The system has improved the productivity of the document warehouse operation. The warehousing module uses radio-controlled terminals, allowing for paperless processing requests for documents and publications and the real time update of location and quantity of documents on shelves. The paper-based submission of requests for documents still constitutes a bottleneck and the new developments are aiming at the introduction of the web-based requests for documents, thus eliminating the need for retyping the requests in the Distribution Section.

128. The system has substantially improved productivity in two ways: by optimizing the path of document picking and making time available for the completion of orders or requests for documents; and by yielding very accurate statistics on the availability of the documents which do not require any additional calculations or re-entry of data.

Digital recording systems

129. The digital recording system was created in 1999, with the Verbatim Reporting Service in mind. The initial goal of the project was to save funds by using off-site verbatim reporters by distributing sound and text files via the Internet to verbatim reporters anywhere in the world.

130. The system is flexible. It makes sound recordings immediately available to the users in all languages. It allows for in-house as well as off-site processing and archiving of digital records with standard computer media (server base data files, CD-R/DVD-R, back-up tapes). The system is mobile and can be used anywhere a conference takes place. The most immediate result in the Verbatim Reporting Service was to reduce drastically international temporary recruitment without sacrificing quality.

131. The digital recording system is also used in-house, allowing for excellent and immediate transmission of sound files, thus eliminating messenger service and the need for cassette-based Dictaphone equipment, while the maintenance of cassette collections (over 100 cassettes per three-hour meeting) has been eliminated.

132. Digital recording and transcription systems have also been tested for future integration into the translation workflow. It involves dictating through a microphone directly to the computer, creating an audio file which is sent over LAN to typists for transcription on computers using separate DPT (digital playback transcription) software. Possible links of digital recording systems and voice recognition systems are also being tested.

Electronic planning and servicing of meetings

133. The first automated element of the meetings servicing chain was the assignment programme for interpreters. The obvious productivity advantages of the system were a motivating factor in the development of the meetings planning module, with a rather limited functionality. The second component of the meetings servicing-oriented system was a room reservation system for bilateral meetings.

134. An analysis undertaken by the departmental Information and Communication Technology Committee resulted in the definition of the scope of an integrated system (e-MEETS), which combines meetings planning and servicing, while remaining the source of data for the scrolling list of meetings and wall display panel for posting meeting-related information.

135. The system has been conceived with future development in mind, as a backbone for referencing data regarding document processing (e-DRITS), distributing documentation for meeting rooms, statistics related to the system of meetings and their servicing. It will incorporate all functions of the calendar of meetings, room reservation and coordination of meeting-related information (e.g. membership and details of ongoing meetings).

136. It will improve the productivity of the current, paper-based procedures by eliminating the duplication of data entry, centralizing the collection of data (organs database, contact points) facilitating preparation of statistical reports for intergovernmental/expert bodies and making provision for accessing essential data elements via the Web.

Computerized terminology data bank

137. The new multilingual United Nations terminology system (UNTERM), which gives the user the ability to search, copy and paste in any of the six official languages, was implemented in 2001, with the use of Lotus Notes, as a result of in-house development.

138. UNTERM is already at a preliminary stage of production. The system is flexible, allowing for the importation of new terminology data, and is or will be accessible across Conference Services in all duty stations via the Intranet and/or Lotus Notes.

Conclusion

139. **Assuming that updated equipment and proper funding are provided, all the aforementioned systems have the potential to enhance productivity, at the user's level or downstream, while maintaining or improving quality. They could also generate savings in various areas in the long run.**

Annex I

Meeting statistics of a core sample of United Nations bodies

A. New York

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UP	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Committee on Conferences, 27-29 August 2001	6	1	0	7	0	1.05/0.00	117	83	95	65	14	0	0	0	14	29	43
7-11 August 2000	6	0	1	5	1	0.50/3.05	83	83	83	180	22	0	0	0	0	33	44
30 August-3 September 1999	6	1	0	7	0	0.15/0.05	117	83	98	20	40	0	6	6	0	24	24
UNICEF, Executive Board																	
Annual session, 4-8 June 2001	10	0	2	8	2	0.20/1.40	80	80	93	120	14	14	0	29	7	0	21
Annual session, 22-26 May 2000	10	0	2	8	1	2.05/1.45	80	80	78	210	0	59	0	0	59	12	65
Annual session, 7-11 June 1999	10	0	0	10	0	3.05/2.00	100	100	83	305	0	8	0	0	0	34	58
Human Rights Committee, seventy-first session, 19 March-6 April 2001	31	2	1	32	0	6.10/2.35	103	90	88	525	NA						
Sixty-eighth session, 13-31 March 2000	28	0	1	27	0	6.45/1.40	96	96	86	505	0	0	0	25	50	0	25
Sixty-fifth session, 22 March-9 April 1999	26	0	1	25	0	4.55/0.05	96	96	90	300	50	17	0	0	0	33	0
General Assembly, Fifth Committee, resumed fifty-fifth session, 7 May-1 June 2001	53	0	20	33	17	10.20/5.45	62	62	84	965	54	6	2	3	13	14	6
Resumed fifty-fifth session, 12 March-6 April 2001	47	0	2	45	1	14.40/11.00	96	96	80	1 540	68	1	4	3	6	10	8
Resumed fifty-fourth session, 8 May-2 June 2000	42	3	0	45		10.10/8.10	107	93	86	1 100	51	3.3	3.3	7.7	5.5	13	13
Resumed fifty-third session, 8-26 March 1999	40	8	2	46	0	7.15/0.10	115	75	91	445	77	0	0	0	3	15	3

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Resumed fifty-third session, 10-28 May 1999	39	2	1	40	0	9.10/9.40	103	92	82	1 130	67	0	3	8	7	1	8
Committee for Programme and Coordination, forty-first session, 11 June-6 July 2001	57	2	4	55	2	16.30/9.45	96	89	82	1 575	11	0	0	11	0	11	67
Fortieth session (first part), 5-30 June 2000	41	22	5	58	1	10.40/2.30	141	34	87	790	0	17	0	17	50	0	0
Fortieth session (second part), 21-29 August 2000	20	0	8	12	0	3.20/4.15	60	60	47	455	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
Thirty-ninth session, 7 June-2 July 1999	45	19	2	62	1	16.55/.20	138	53	89	1 035	33	17	9	0	17	9	17
United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Working Group on Electronic Commerce, thirty-eighth session, 12-23 March 2001 (New York)	19	0	2	17	0	3.15/3.15	89	89	78	390	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thirty-seventh session, 18-29 September 2000 (Vienna)	18	0	1	17	0	1.40/1.00	94	94	89	160	33	0	6	6	5	22	28
Thirty-sixth session, 14-25 February 2000 (New York)	20	0	1	17	2	3.30/0.00	85	95	99	210	50	0	0	0	50	0	0
Thirty-fifth session, 6-17 September 1999 (Vienna)	18	0	1	17	0	3.00/0.30	94	94	89	210	69	8	8	8	7	0	0
8-19 February 1999 (Vienna)	18	0	1	17	0	3.05/0.25	94	94	88	210	92	8	0	0	0	0	0
Committee on Contributions, sixty-first session, 11-29 June 2001	21	0	4	17	3	5.35/5.35	81	81	78	670	0	0	10	0	0	20	15
Sixtieth session, 5-30 June 2000	40	1	12	29	6	8.10/2.50	73	68	76	660	25	0	13	25	0	0	38
Fifty-ninth session, 7-25 June 1999	30	0	10	20	6	4.45/4.45	67	67	76	570	0	0	10	20	0	50	20

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Statistical Commission, thirty-second session, 6-9 March 2001	7	0	1	6	0	0.55/1.00	86	86	77	110	7	14	25	25	11	7	11
Thirty-first session, 29 February-3 March 2000	8	0	2	6	2	0.10/0.35	75	75	97	45	0	10	25	35	25	0	5
Thirtieth session, 1-5 March 1999	10	0	2	8	1	1.10/1.25	80	80	81	155	20	14	6	40	14	3	3
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Executive Board																	
First regular session, 22-26 January 2001	8	0	2	6	1	0.35/2.15	75	75	76	170	12	40	25	2	9	5	4
First regular session, 31 January-4 February 2000	10	0	3	7	2	1.35/1.40	70	70	79	195	0	0	0	50	25	17	8.3
First regular session, 19-22 January 1999	8	0	1	7	1	2.00/1.50	88	88	87	180	0	4	8	32	12	16	24
Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations																	
7-25 May 2001	30	0	0	30	0	17.30/5.25	100	100	75	1 375	0	21	0	4	7	25	4
12-23 June 2000	20	0	1	19	1	11.35/0.55	95	95	79	750	25	6.3	38	6.3	0	0	25
1-18 June 1999	30	3	2	31	1	17.20/0.50	103	83	79	1 090	0	5	0	16	16	26	11
General Assembly, First Committee, fifty-sixth session, 2001	31	2	9	24	8	5.15/17.15	77	65	74	1 350	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	34	1	5	30	1	6.45/15.35	85	82	67	1 340	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	34	0	6	28	6	5.20/26.25	82	82	69	1 905	NA						
General Assembly, fifty-sixth session, plenary, 2001	157	3	64	93	32	11.35/30.40	59	57	71	2 535	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, plenary, 2000	158	15	65	106	42	1.20/22.05	67	49	87	1 405	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, plenary, 1999	125	17	38	104	25	19.40/11.35	83	56	84	1 875	NA						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, 2-12 April 2001	18	0	2	16	0	7.35/3.15	89	89	69	650	0	0	100	0	0	0	0
10-20 April 2000	16	0	2	14	2	3.50/2.45	88	88	86	395	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
12-23 April 1999	20	0	5	15	2	7.40/6.10	75	75	62	830	33	0	0	0	0	0	67
General Assembly, Fifth Committee, fifty-sixth session, 2001	124	4	21	107	8	41.40/39.00	86	80	69	4 840	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	178	20	24	172	18	41.45/33.25	97	75	84	4 510	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	174	12	29	157	2	24.20/10.25	90	76	79	2 085	NA						
General Assembly, Special Political and Decolonization Committee, (Fourth Committee), fifty-sixth session, 2001	26	3	7	22	5	4.00/18.05	85	62	68	1 325	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	34	3	7	30	2	4.35/22.30	85	59	62	1 625	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	30	1	4	27	3	5.40/15.40	90	83	74	1 280	NA						
ACABQ																	
1 May-13 July 2001	63	0	9	54	3	5.55/41.45	86	86	65	2 860	NA						
2-26 May 2000	37	0	13	22	5	1.55/13.05	59	65	65	900	NA						
4 May-16 July 1999	103	2	10	95	3	3.55/32.35	92	88	82	2 190	NA						
UNDP/UNFPA, Executive Board																	
First regular session, 29 January-6 February 2001	16	0	4	12	1	4.00/3.40	75	75	65	460	3	14	3	11	14	32	11
First regular session, 17-28 January 2000	11	1	0	12	0	4.25/3.30	109	91	78	475	0	0	0	0	13	40	33
First regular session, 25-29 January 1999	9	0	0	9	0	2.10/3.00	100	100	81	310	6	38	31	6	6	13	0

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
General Assembly, Sixth Committee, fifty-sixth session, 2001	51	2	10	43	3	19.15/17.50	84	76	63	2 225	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	91	1	12	69	11	23.50/34.20	75	86	78	3 490	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	66	4	6	64	3	22.50/12.10	97	85	79	2 100	NA						
UNICEF, Executive Board																	
Second regular session, 4-7 September 2001	10	0	5	5	2	0.40/1.45	50	50	62	145	0	0	0	0	0	50	0
Second regular session, 18-22 September 2000	6	0	1	5	0	1.15/0	83	83	76	75	0	0	2.4	4.8	14	2.4	76
Second regular session, 6-10 September 1999	8	0	1	7	1	3.05/.05	88	88	87	190	3	0	3	11	44	28	11
Commission on Sustainable Development																	
Ninth session, 16-27 April 2001	40	11	8	43	6	21.55/31.40	108	53	61	3 215	67	4	4	0	3	3	19
Eighth session, 24 April-5 May 2000	35	5	4	36	3	11.35/3.25	103	74	85	900	86	7.1	0	7.1	0	0	0
Seventh session, 19-30 April 1999	30	4	2	32	1	6.25/6.25	107	80	84	770	73	3	0	3	0	9	6
Commission for Social Development, thirty-ninth session, 13-23 February 2001	16	2	0	18	0	9.30/11.35	113	88	61	1 265	15	0	0	0	23	23	31
Thirty-eighth session, 8-17 February 2000	19	10	1	29	0	11.05/3.35	153	42	80	880	0	0	0	33	0	67	0
Thirty-seventh session, 9-19 February 1999	16	0	0	16	0	5.55/5.55	100	100	75	710	5	0	9	4	17	17	48
Committee on Information, twenty-third session, 30 April-11 May 2001	20	0	7	13	5	5.15/12.30	65	65	60	1 065	50	10	10	20	10	0	0
Twenty-second session, 1-12 May 2000	20	0	9	11	7	4.10/5.05	55	55	75	549	20	0	30	0	10	20	20

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Twenty-first session, 3-14 May 1999	20	0	6	14	4	4.25/4.15	70	70	76	520	22	11	0	0	11	0	33
ACABQ																	
6 February-30 March 2001	66	1	8	59	5	4.10/70.20	89	86	58	4 470	NA						
1 February-31 March 2000	57	0	12	45	9	1.40/18.20	79	79	83	1 200	NA						
2 February-26 March 1999	75	0	9	66	4	2.45/31.50	88	88	78	2 075	NA						
General Assembly, Third Committee, fifty-sixth session, 2001	59	3	15	47	4	11.15/35.20	80	69	57	2 795	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	67	4	13	58	5	13.25/34.05	85	75	66	2 850	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	56	6	2	60	2	13.30/30.10	107	86	77	2 620	NA						
Commission on the Status of Women																	
Forty-fifth session, 6-16 March 2001	20	2	1	21	1	14.40/14.15	105	85	56	1 735	0	0	12	12	12	47	12
Forty-fourth session, 28 February-2 March 2000	8	0	0	8	0	2.40/1.40	100	100	82	260	0	0	0	10	0	10	80
Forty-third session, 1-19 March 1999	30	7	1	36	1	13.50/6.40	120	73	82	1 230	6	6	6	0	33	22	27
General Assembly, Second Committee, fifty-sixth session, 2001	78	1	26	53	10	16.20/4.05	68	65	56	3 430	NA						
Fifty-fifth session, 2000	85	2	30	57	20	15.45/25.15	66	62	73	2 460	NA						
Fifty-fourth session, 1999	70	18	9	79	4	23.50/40.30	113	61	70	3 860	NA						
ACABQ																	
4 September-21 December 2001	162	0	47	115	14	9.55/121.50	71	71	53	7 905	NA						
5 September-22 December 2000	153	3	24	132	17	18.00/72.10	86	82	76	5 410	NA						
13 September-17 December 1999	138	0	37	101	21	7.55/44.50	73	73	76	3 165	NA						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Commission on Population and Development																	
Thirty-fourth session, 2-6 April 2001	10	0	2	8	1	1.55/9.10	80	80	53	665	44	11	0	22	22	0	0
Thirty-third session, 27-31 March 2000	10	0	3	7	0	2.00/4.25	70	70	49	385	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thirty-second session, 22 March-2 April 1999	16	5	0	21	0	4.55/2.35	131	69	88	450	46	15	15	0	8	8	8
Disarmament Commission,																	
9-27 April 2001	28	0	3	25	3	10.35/30.55	89	89	51	2 490	0	0	0	0	25	0	25
26 June-7 July 2000	18	1	2	17	0	7.15/7.05	94	83	64	860	0	0	0	0	0	0	33
12-30 April 1999	51	1	4	48	0	23.05/30.35	94	90	58	3 220	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and its Working Group																	
18 June-27 July 2001	42	0	2	40	2	10.55/51.45	95	95	50	3 760	NA						
11 February-10 March 2000	41	0	9	32	8	7.05/5.40	78	78	87	765	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
23 March-23 April 1999	42	0	7	35	5	10.00/13.55	83	83	76	1 435	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
Economic and Social Council,																	
Organizational session,																	
30 January-2 February 2001	10	0	6	4	2	1.25/1.45	40	40	49	190	0	0	0	0	0	22	67
Organizational session,																	
1-4 February 2000	7	0	4	3	1	0.55/3.40	43	43	35	275	0	0	0	0	0	40	0
Organizational session,																	
2-5 February 1999	8	1	3	6	2	1.00/3.45	75	50	71	285	33	17	9	0	17	9	17
UNDP/UNFPA — Executive Board, second regular session,																	
10-14 September 2001	10	0	4	6	0	2.50/6.05	60	60	30	535	9	0	9	9	0	9	55
Second regular session, 3-7 April 2000	10	0	0	10	0	4.00/1.00	100	100	83	300	0	0	15	0	12	42	31

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Second regular session, 12-16 April 1999	10	0	1	9	0	2.05/1.15	90	90	79	200	0	17	17	50	8	8	0
Economic and Social Council, resumed organizational session,																	
3-4 May 2001	4	0	2	2	0	1.20/2.05	50	50	22	205	0	0	5	5	40	0	35
3-4 May 2000	4	0	2	2	0	0.30/0.55	50	50	40	75	28	5.6	5.6	22	11	5.6	5.6
Resumed organizational session, 6-7 May 1999	4	0	1	3	1	0.25/0.00	75	75	97	25	11	0	11	28	6	22	22
Committee for Programme and Coordination, organizational session,																	
2 May 2001	2	0	1	1	0	0.30/0.00	50	50	10	145	0	0	40	20	0	20	20
2 May 2000	1	0	0	1	0	0.15/1.10	100	100	53	85	20	0	0	0	0	40	40

B. Geneva

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
International Law Commission, fifty-third session (first part), 23 April-1 May 2001	45	0	0	45	0	3.30/4.20	100	100	94	470	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
(second part), 2 July-10 August 2001	42	0	0	42	0	0.30/11.25	100	100	91	715	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fifty-second session (first part), 1 May-9 June 2000	46	0	0	46	0	2.30/5.20	100	100	94	470	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fifty-second session (second part), 10 July-18 August 2000	48	1	0	49	0	1.55/4.40	102	98	96	395	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Fifty-first session, 3 May-23 July 1999	92	0	0	92	0	4.05/2.25	100	100	98	390							
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, twenty-fifth session, 23 April-11 May 2001	30	0	1	29	0	2.40/0.05	97	97	94	165	51	5	14	5	5	5	5
Twenty-second session, 22 April-12 May 2000	28	0	2	26	0	3.10/5.00	93	93	87	490	56	8	8	12	8	4	0
Twentieth session, 26 April-14 May 1999	28	0	1	27	0	2.30/7.05	96	96	85	575	19	0	0	0	81	0	0
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, fifty-ninth session, 30 July-17 August 2001	30	0	1	29	0	2.50/1.25	97	97	93	255	41	0	3	5	41	8	3
Fifty-seventh session, 31 July-25 August 2000	40	0	1	39	0	7.50/7.15	98	98	85	905	39	0	0	0	13	4	17
Fifty-fifth session, 2-27 August 1999	40	0	1	39	0	3.40/5.20	97	97	90	540	1	0	9	0	70	3	17
Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, fifty-third session, July-17 August 2001	30	2	2	30	0	1.20/1.10	100	87	91	150	20	3	4	3	6	7	5
Fifty-second session, 31 July-18 August 2000	30	3	1	32	0	3.20/0.35	107	90	93	235	12	5	4	10	3	7	15

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Fifty-first session, 2-27 August 1999	40	1	3	38	0	1.55/2.20	95	90	89	255							
Human Rights Committee, seventy-second session, 9-27 July 2001	30	0	1	29	0	3.35/1.55	97	97	91	330	21	0	5	3	3	23	28
Sixty-ninth session, 10-28 July 2000	30	3	1	32	0	3.30/1.55	107	87	91	325	59	0	0	0	6	0	6
Sixty-sixth session, 12-30 July 1999	30	3	1	32	0	3.10/6.50	107	87	87	600	7	0	4	16	21	31	21
Committee on the Rights of the Child, twenty-seventh session, 21 May-8 June 2001	26	0	1	25	0	2.45/2.15	96	96	90	300	50	4	0	12	15	4	8
Twenty-fourth session, 15 May-2 June 2000	28	0	2	26	0	1.30/1.15	93	93	90	165	79	0	3	6	3	0	3
Twenty-first session, 17 May-4 June 1999	28	0	3	25	0	1.05/4.40	89	89	82	345	39	25	0	0	0	0	36
Human Rights Committee, seventy-third session, 15 October-2 November 2001	30	0	1	29	0	4.50/1.20	97	97	90	370	10	0	13	13	19	32	6
Seventieth session, 16 October-3 November 2000	30	0	1	29	0	5.20/2.25	93	93	88	465	24	4	4	4	4	20	28
Sixty-seventh session, 18 October-5 November 1999	30	0	1	29	0	3.35/0.30	97	97	92	245	5	0	0	8	14	2	71
Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights — Working Group on Indigenous Populations, nineteenth session, 23-27 July 2001	10	1	0	11	0	1.20/1.50	110	90	90	190	44	0	0	22	22	11	0
Eighteenth session, 24-28 July 2000	10	1	1	10	0	1.35/1.05	100	83	71	160	17	0	33	33	0	17	0
Seventeenth session, 27-31 July 1999	10	0	0	10	0	3.00/3.35	100	100	78	395	0	1	2	17	74	0	5

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Committee on the Rights of the Child, twenty-eighth session, 24 September-12 October 2001	30	0	2	28	0	3.35/0.15	93	93	89	230	59	7	4	0	4	7	7
Twenty-fifth session, 18 September-6 October 2000	32	0	2	30	0	1.40/4.30	94	94	88	370	70	9	4	4	4	4	4
Twenty-second session, 20 September-1 October 1999 and Special Meeting, 30 September-1 October 1999	36	0	1	35	0	4.15/9.20	97	97	92	815	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, fifty-eighth session, 6-23 March 2001	28	0	1	27	0	4.40/1.20	96	96	89	360	40	3	0	5	5	50	3
Fifty-sixth session, 6-24 March 2000	28	0	0	28	0	4.10/1.40	100	100	93	350	54	29	3	3	3	6	3
Fifty-fourth session, 1-19 March 1999	30	0	1	29	0	4.55/2.10	97	97	89	425	48	19	7	7	0	19	0
Commission on Human Rights, fifty-seventh session, 19 March-27 April 2001	56	34	1	89	0	13.50/14.25	159	38	88	1 695	41	10	6	6	5	8	5
Fifty-sixth session, 20 March-28 April 2000	56	18	4	70	0	9.30/11.20	132	61	85	1 250	29	4	15	21	3	5	4
Fifty-fifth session, 22 March-30 April 1999	54	26	4	76	0	4.00/8.25	140	45	90	745	30	0	13	0	23	12	22
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, extraordinary session, 13-31 August 2001	30	0	1	29	0	3.40/5.25	97	97	87	545	46	13	4	13	4	0	13
Extraordinary session, 14 August-1 September 2000	20	0	0	20	0	0.50/3.05	100	98	93	235	38	15	15	4	0	0	4
Economic and Social Council — Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, 2-6 July 2001	10	0	1	9	0	0.30/4.30	94	94	85	300	81	15	4	0	0	0	0
5-11 December 2001	10	0	1	9	0	0.15/1.55	90	90	83	130	0	4	0	17	38	29	8

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
3-12 July 2000	16	0	1	16	0	0.30/4.30	94	94	85	300	81	15	4	0	0	0	0
5-16 July 1999	20	0	6	14	0	0.15/0.20	70	70	69	35	21	23	11	0	0	46	0
6-15 December 1999	16	0	1	15	0	0.15/1.45	94	94	90	120							
Committee against Torture, twenty-sixth session, 30 April-18 May 2001	30	0	2	28	0	4.10/5.20	93	93	83	570	28	5	2	2	0	7	19
Twenty-fourth session, 1-19 May 2000	30	0	1	29	0	1.30/11.10	93	93	86	760	46	0	4	2	7	9	7
Twenty-second session, 22 April-14 May 1999	28	0	1	27	0	1.50/14.55	96	96	76	1 005	0	0	0	27	37	36	0
Committee against Torture, twenty-fifth session, twenty-seventh session, 12-23 November 2001	20	0	1	19	0	2.20/6.05	95	95	81	505	35	0	5	5	0	25	30
13-24 November 2000	20	0	2	18	0	1.00/5.40	90	90	79	400	29	5	0	0	10	5	29
Twenty-third session, 8-19 November 1999	20	0	1	19	0	1.35/9.35	95	95	76	670	0	0	0	78	22	0	0
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, twenty-seventh session, 12-30 November 2001	30	0	2	28	0	6.15/7.25	93	93	78	820	21	7	14	10	7	17	14
Twenty-third session, 13 November-1 December 2000	30	0	1	29		1.25/5.55	97	97	86	560	17	8	0	29	17	13	17
Twenty-first session, 15 November-3 December 1999	30	0	1	29	0	3.55/1.20	97	97	91	315	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Committee on the Rights of the Child, twenty-sixth session, 8-26 January 2001	30	0	5	25	0	3.05/3.05	83	83	77	370	56	11	0	17	6	0	0
Twenty-third session, 10-28 January 2000	30	0	1	29	0	2.05/0.25	97	97	94	150	73	0	0	7	0	13	7
Twentieth session, 11-29 January 1999	28	0	2	26	0	2.50/1.35	93	93	88	265	0	12	18	50	0	20	0

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, fifty-second session, 1-5 October 2001	10	0	1	9	0	2.25/3.20	90	90	71	345	20	10	0	0	10	0	0
Fifty-first session, 2-6 October 2000	11	0	1	10	0	1.55/6.40	91	91	65	515	14	14	0	14	14	0	0
Fiftieth session, 4-8 October 1999	11	0	2	9	0	1.30/3.00	82	82	68	270							
Economic and Social Council — substantive session, 2-27 July 2001	80	1	20	61	0	8.45/4.40	76	75	70	805	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 July-1 August 2000 (New York)	46	2	7	40	2	11.05/13.00	87	80	73	1 445	15	6.8	3.4	8.5	1.7	15	6.8
5-30 July 1999	80	2	22	60	0	18.35/20.55	75	70	57	2 370	0	0	0	0	0	13	25
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Trade and Development Board, forty-eighth session, 1-12 October 2001	23	0	4	19	0	5.50/4.00	83	83	68	590	25	13	13	38	0	13	13
Forty-seventh session, 9-20 October 2000	22	0	1	21	0	7.25/5.05	95	95	83	750	17	8	0	0	42	17	17
Forty-sixth session, 18-29 October 1999	20	2	0	22	0	6.15/5.30	110	90	82	705	0	0	0	0	0	23	77

C. Vienna

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MB	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	At Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
International Narcotics Control Board, seventy-second session, 29 October-15 November 2001	28	0	0	28	0	0.40/0.05	100	100	100	45	8	4	7	10	18	14	8
Sixty-ninth session, 1-17 November 2000	26	0	0	26	0	0.55/0.00	100	100	100	55	9	3	4	4	16	15	17
Sixty-seventh session, 1-18 November 1999	28	0	0	28	0	1.25/0.00	100	100	98	85	13	1	4	7	7	21	23
International Narcotics Control Board, seventy-first session, 21 May-1 June 2001	20	0	0	20	0	0.25/3.15	100	100	95	220	0	11	17	19	0	22	22
Sixty-eighth session, 15-26 May 2000	20	0	0	20	0	0.55/0.45	100	100	95	100	2	9	16	7	7	19	14
Sixty-sixth session, 10-21 May 1999	20	0	0	20	0	0.35/0.55	100	100	98	90	16	5	8	18	3	16	29
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, tenth session, 8-17 May 2001	16	0	0	16	0	1.45/3.30	100	100	88	315	0	0	0	14	11	21	17
Ninth session, 18-20 April 2000	6	0	2	4	0	1.45/1.05	67	67	50	170	11	5	4	5	5	25	18
Eighth session, 27 April-6 May 1999	16	0	0	16	0	4.25/8.30	100	100	73	775	2	11	3	2	3	16	20
Seventh session, 21-30 April 1998	16	0	1	15	0	4.40/4.40	94	94	75	560	6	6	4	5	2	5	44
UNCITRAL, thirty-fourth session, 21 May-1 June 2001 (Vienna)	30	0	0	30	0	6.55/5.40	100	100	87	755	23	8	24	12	9	11	10
Thirty-third session, 12 June-7 July 2000 (New York)	38	0	1	37	0	6.00/0	97	97	92	360	80	20	0	0	0	0	0
Thirty-second session, 17 May-4 June 1999 (Vienna)	26	0	1	25	0	3.55/1.40	96	96	89	335	26	8	6	6	21	7	17

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MB	PAP	UP	MINUTES	CI	At issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space — Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, thirty-eighth session, 12-23 February 2001	20	0	1	19	0	2.00/4.50	95	95	85	410	25	8	0	0	4	17	4
Thirty-seventh session, 7-18 February 2000	20	0	1	19	0	4.40/3.50	95	95	80	510	0	0	0	0	4	57	19
Thirty-sixth session, 22-26 February 1999	10	1	0	11	0	3.05/0.40	110	90	89	225	7	4	8	14	17	29	7
UNCITRAL — Working Group on Arbitration, thirty-fifth session, 19-30 November 2001	18	0	1	17	0	5.25/1.10	94	94	83	395	0	0	33	0	6	44	11
Thirty-third session, 20 November-1 December 2000	20	0	1	19	0	2.55/1.05	95	95	90	240	39	11	6	23	11	6	0
Thirty-second session, 20-31 March 2000	18	0	1	17	0	3.30/2.00	94	94	83	330	56	17	6	11	0	5	5
Commission on Narcotic Drugs, forty-fourth session, 20-29 March 2001	**10**	**0**	**0**	**16**	**0**	**5.20/3.10**	**100**	**100**	**81**	**510**	**19**	**6**	**9**	**7**	**37**	**7**	**13**
Forty-third session, 6-15 March 2000	**16**	**0**	**2**	**14**	**0**	**5.50/4.00**	**88**	**88**	**69**	**590**	**5**	**20**	**20**	**35**	**5**	**15**	**0**
Forty-second session, 16-25 March 1999	**16**	**0**	**1**	**15**	**0**	**4.55/1.25**	**94**	**94**	**81**	**380**	**22**	**6**	**1**	**8**	**10**	**13**	**26**
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Legal Subcommittee, fortieth session, 2-12 April 2001	**18**	**0**	**0**	**18**	**0**	**4.35/8.35**	**100**	**100**	**78**	**790**	**17**	**0**	**31**	**17**	**0**	**17**	**0**
Thirty-ninth session, 27 March-7 April 2000	**20**	**0**	**3**	**17**	**0**	**4.40/13.55**	**85**	**85**	**55**	**1 115**	**32**	**11**	**16**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Thirty-eighth session, 1-5 March 1999	**10**	**0**	**1**	**9**	**0**	**2.55/2.50**	**90**	**90**	**71**	**345**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**43**	**29**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI Issued by end of week 6	5	4	3	2	1
Commission on Narcotic Drugs, forty-fourth session, Committee of the Whole, 21-28 March 2001	12	0	0	12	0	5.35/2.15	100	100	75	470	NA						
Forty-third session, 7-10 March 2000	8	0	0	8	0	3.10/3.15	100	100	75	385	NA						
Forty-second session, 17-22 March 1999	4	0	0	4	0	2.10/2.00	100	100	65	250	NA						
United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), fiftieth session, 23-27 April 2001	10	0	2	8	0	0.15/3.50	80	80	70	245	0	0	11	0	67	0	11
Forty-ninth session, 2-11 May 2000	16	0	0	16	0	0.05/0.15	100	100	100	20	53	30	0	0	12	0	0
Forty-eighth session, 12-16 April 1999	10	0	0	10	0	0.0/2.55	100	100	90	175	54	8	15	15	0	0	8
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, forty-fourth session, 6-15 June 2001	16	0	1	15	0	3.00/9.10	94	94	69	730	15	0	10	0	0	15	60
Forty-third session, 7-16 June 2000	14	0	0	14	0	3.45/11.30	100	100	64	915	17	0	17	17	8	8	3
Forty-second session, 14-16 July 1999	6	0	0	6	0	1.55/0.50	100	100	85	165	39	0	3	10	29	0	0

* UNCITRAL Working Groups were renumbered. ICP was originally WG.II, but has been changed to WG.V, formerly called "Receivables Financing" (hence the different session number).

D. Nairobi

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Governing Council, twenty-first session, 5-9 February 2001	10	8	0	18	0	0.25	180	20	100								
UNEP Governing Council Special session, 29-31 May 2000	4	0	0	4	0	0	100	100	100	0	60						
UNEP Governing Council, twentieth session, 1-5 February 1999	10	3	0	13	0	6.50	130	70	82	410	58						
Second substantive session of the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) 19-23 February 2001	10	9	0	19	0	3.05	190	10	95								
First substantive session of the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) 8-12 May 2000	10	0	0	10	0	0	100	100	100	0	65						
Organizational session of the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) 13-14 May 1999	6	0	0	6	0	1.25	100	100	93	85	67	13	0	0	0	2	0

ANNEXES

	A	B	C	D	E	F	MR	PAF	UF	MINUTES	CI	AI issued by end of week					
												6	5	4	3	2	1
Commission on Human Settlements, eighteenth session, 12-16 February 2001	10	8	0	18	0	1.10	180	20	98								
Commission on Human Settlements, seventeenth session, 5-12 May 1999	21	4	0	25	0	12.30	1.19	170	76	750	68	98	1	14	.66	4	1

Annex II

Statistics on the provision of conference services for meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States at the four duty stations

(July 2001-April 2002)

	Interpretation services			*Conference facilities*	
Grouping	*Requested*	*Provided*	*Not provided*	*Requested*	*Provided*
New York					
Group of 77 and China	39	39	-	462	462
Non-Aligned Movement	13	13	-	22	22
African Group	44	42	2	34	34
Asian Group	17	13	4	2	2
Latin American and Caribbean States Group	25	25	-	2	2
Western European and other States Group	15	15	-	3	3
Arab Group	8	8	-	64	64
Alliance of Small Island States	-	-	-	12	12
Association of Caribbean States	-	-	-	-	-
Association of South-East Asian Nations	-	-	-	-	-
Caribbean Community	-	-	-	15	15
Commonwealth States	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern European Group	-	-	-	6	6
Economic Community of West African States	6	6	-	2	2
European Community	7	7	-	4	4
Central American Group	3	3	-	1	1
Islamic Group (OIC)	9	9	-	10	10
Joint Coordinating Committee of Group of 77 and China and Movement of Non-Aligned Countries	-	-	-	-	-
JUSCANZ (Japan, United States, Canada and New Zealand)	-	-	-	81	81
Landlocked Countries	2	2	-	-	-
Least Developed Countries	8	8	-	4	4
Rio Group	11	11	-	5	5
Southern African Development Community	-	-	-	14	14
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation	-	-	-	-	-

Grouping	Interpretation services			Conference facilities	
	Requested	Provided	Not provided	Requested	Provided
South Pacific Forum	-	-	-	-	-
Group of 21	2	2	-	-	-
Indian Ocean Rim Association	1	1	-	-	-
Group of 15	1	1	-	3	3
Gulf Cooperation Council	1	1	-	-	-
Geneva Group	1	1	-	-	-
Ibero-American Group	1	1	-	-	-
Some developing countries	-	-	-	4	4
Subtotal	**207**	**201**	**6**	**747**	**747**
Geneva					
Group of 77 and China	12	12	-	-	-
African Group	1	1	-	1	1
African Regional Dialogue	7	7	-	-	-
Latin American and Caribbean States Group	19	19	-	-	-
League of Arab States/Latin American and Caribbean States Group	2	2	-	-	-
Latin American and Caribbean States Group/European Union	1	1	-	-	-
Subtotal	**42**	**42**	**-**	**1**	**1**
Vienna					
African Group	-	-	-	40	40
Asian Group	-	-	-	25	25
Eastern European States Group/Group D	-	-	-	6	6
European Union Coordination Group	-	-	-	40	40
Group of 77 and China	-	-	-	48	48
Latin American and Caribbean States Group	-	-	-	54	54
Western European and other States Group	-	-	-	6	6
ASEAN Group	-	-	-	4	4
Arab Group	-	-	-	1	1
G-8 Group	-	-	-	5	5
Other regional groups	-	-	-	2	2
Subtotal	**-**	**-**	**-**	**231**	**231**

Grouping	Interpretation services			Conference facilities	
	Requested	Provided	Not provided	Requested	Provided
Nairobi					
Group of 77 and China	-	-	-	14	14
European Union Coordination Group	-	-	-	11	11
Western European and other States Group	-	-	-	4	4
Other regional groups	-	-	-	2	2
Subtotal				31	31
Grand total					
July 2001-April 2002	249	243	6	1 009	1 009
July 2000-June 2001	318	292	26	1 465	1 465
July 1999-June 2000	321	269	52	1 194	1 194

Annex III

A. Requests for meetings during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly

1. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Letter dated 12 June 2002 from the Chairman of the Committee

As you are aware, in resolution 56/33 of 3 December 2001, the General Assembly has again requested the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate. By the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks.

As the Committee has no control over the timing of the events that it is called upon to discuss, it needs to meet throughout the year, as circumstances dictate. Based on past experience, the Committee would request facilities for approximately six meetings per General Assembly session. These are in addition to the solemn meeting in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which is included in each year's calendar.

In light of the above, I should like to request that authorization again be granted to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to hold meetings during the forthcoming fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, as necessary for carrying out the important mandate entrusted to the Committee by the Assembly.

2. Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 21 June 2002 from the Secretary of the Committee

As in previous years, I hereby submit a request that the Committee on Relations with the Host Country be permitted to meet during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

This request is based on the Committee's mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI) of 15 December 1971 authorizing the Committee to meet periodically during the year or whenever the need arises. The Committee, since its establishment in 1971, has always met during the regular sessions of the Assembly in order to consider, among other things, problems experienced by delegations of Member States, to finalize its annual report and to present it to the General Assembly.

Pursuant to its resolution 56/84 of 12 December 2001, the Assembly requested the Committee to continue its work in conformity with resolution 2819 (XXVI) and to submit a report on its work to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. Having due regard to the nature of the Committee, its work, and previous experiences, it

would suffice to make the necessary conference facilities available for two or three meetings only.

3. Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Memorandum dated 24 June 2002 from the Secretary of the Working Group

In its resolution 56/53, adopted at its fifty-sixth session, regarding the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the General Assembly requested that the Working Group continue its efforts, in cooperation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, to find a solution to the financial situation of the Agency.

In order to meet this request, the Working Group needs the latest data with regard to the UNRWA budget, i.e. up-to-date information on the current budget and precise indications as to the needed revenue and the anticipated contributions for the next fiscal year. UNRWA has not been in a position that would enable the Agency to supply the Working Group with this timely information any earlier than September 2002 and the Working Group cannot prepare its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session without this important material.

In view of the obligation of the Working Group to submit its up-to-date report not later than the first half of October for consideration by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee and the General Assembly, little time is available for the few meetings of the Working Group and for the preparation of its report.

It would be very much appreciated if you could draw to the attention of the Committee on Conferences the request of the Working Group that it be authorized to meet during the first weeks of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

4. Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund

Letter dated 24 June 2002 from the Secretary of the Board

We note that the proposed timing for the second regular session of 2002 and related meetings of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) during the last quarter of 2002 will overlap with the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

I understand that the Secretariat can provide full services for these meetings, subject to the granting of special permission from the General Assembly.

We would, therefore, be grateful if the Committee on Conferences could give its favourable consideration to the holding of the second regular session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board during the period from 23 to 27 September 2002.

5. Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Memorandum dated 26 June 2002 from the Assistant Secretary of the Board

We would be most grateful if you would, in accordance with the exception to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 42/243, seek the approval of the Committee for the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to meet from 16 to 20 September 2002.

As is usual practice, UNICEF holds three Executive Board sessions per year as follows: (a) first regular session (January); (b) annual session (June); and (c) second regular session (September). We also have to bear in mind the scheduling of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board sessions.

In view of the dates of the annual session, and to ensure sufficient time for the preparation, translation and distribution of documents, our second regular session has normally been scheduled for September — and no later in the year — owing to the General Assembly.

6. Committee on Conferences

The Committee usually holds its substantive session towards the end of August. This year, however, it is scheduled from 9 to 13 September as some Committee members, as well as key United Nations management personnel, will be attending the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which will take place from 26 August to 4 September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In light of the above, the Committee on Conferences requests authorization to hold part of its substantive session, approximately four meetings, during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

B. Statistical information

The table below refers to meetings with interpretation held during the main part of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly by the bodies listed above.

Body	*Number of meetings held*	*Hours and minutes lost*		
		Late starting	*Early ending*	*Total hours and minutes lost*
1. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	4	1.10	6.05	7.15
2. Committee on Relations with the Host Country	1	0.15	1.05	1.20
3. Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	2	0.10	4.15	4.25
4. Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund	6	2.50	6.05	8.55
5. UNICEF	5	1.15	-	1.15
6. Committee on Conferences	7	1.05	-	1.05